



2013 Mid-Year Convention Airway Heights, Washington

RESOLUTION #13 - 44

“REDUCE CANCER RISK TO TRIBAL FISH CONSUMERS TO AT LEAST ONE IN ONE MILLION

PREAMBLE

We the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders, and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise to promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the ATNI are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, promotion of the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity of native people, and preservation of their cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, since time immemorial, we the first people of the Pacific Northwest have cared for and sustained the First Foods beginning with the pure water that we hold sacred and are guided by our traditional religious and cultural practices, are obligated to take action now to care for the water for the next seven generations; and

WHEREAS, many waters throughout the Pacific Northwest now contain unsafe levels of toxic contamination causing native people to face unacceptable health risks due to their consumption of shellfish and fish from these waters; and

WHEREAS, national Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance allows subsistence fishermen to be exposed to cancer risks that are 100 times greater than those of the general population; and

WHEREAS, numerous regional fish consumption surveys show that this guidance has a disproportionate health impact in Native American communities, where a higher percentage of the population eats significant amounts of fish in comparison to the general population; and

WHEREAS, the application of standards that disproportionately and negatively impact tribal communities is prohibited by EPA's tribal trust responsibility, and EPA is required to uphold its national environmental justice policies; and

WHEREAS, EPA has effectively repudiated the applicability of its national cancer risk guidance to Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest by disapproving water quality standards submitted by Oregon and Idaho that were consistent with the risk thresholds for subsistence fishermen set forth in national guidance; and

WHEREAS, numerous regional fish consumption surveys show that this guidance has a disproportionate health impact in Native American communities, where a higher percentage of the population eats significant amounts of fish in comparison to the general population; and

WHEREAS, EPA relied upon these surveys to support its disapproval of water quality standards submitted by Oregon and Idaho that were consistent with the risk thresholds for subsistence fishermen set forth in national guidance which effectively repudiated the applicability of its national cancer risk guidance to Indian people in the Pacific Northwest; and

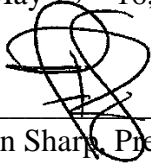
WHEREAS, formalization of this position throughout the Pacific Northwest is necessary to protect and improve human and environmental health through water quality and sediment standards for the benefit of natural resources, First Foods, and indigenous people throughout our region; and

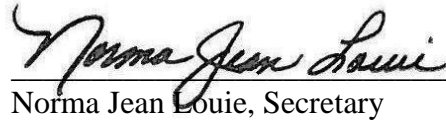
WHEREAS, protecting Native Americans will protect all people who benefit the most from the beneficial use of fish consumption; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that ATNI does hereby request that EPA immediately establish a regional and/or national policy that ensures that all Native American fish consumers will be protected to an incremental cancer risk threshold that is at least as protective as the threshold for the general population of 1 in 1,000,000, and consistent with ATNI Resolution #12-54 to accomplish a tribal fish consumption rate of no less than 175 grams per day for human health criteria rulemaking in the Pacific Northwest.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2013 Mid-Year Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at Northern Quest Resort Casino, Airway Heights, Washington on May 13 – 16, 2013 with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President

Norma Jean Louie, Secretary